

**AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS**

Claim 1. (*Currently Amended*) A binding to retain a boot on a gliding or rolling apparatus, said binding comprising:

a base for supporting the boot, said base including an upper surface extending along a plane;

a first lateral flange, a second lateral flange transversely spaced from said first lateral flange, said first and second lateral flanges extending upwardly relative to said surface of said base;

at least one linkage connecting said first lateral flange to said second lateral flange, said linkage ~~including~~ comprising:

a first band extending from one fastening end to a free end, a first fastener attaching said fastening end of said first band to said first ~~flange~~, lateral flange;

a second band and a second fastener attaching said second band to said second lateral flange;

~~said linkage further including~~ a tightening device attached to said second lateral flange and fixed to said second band, said tightening device facilitating an adjustment of a length of said linkage by removably retaining a portion of said first band;

an abutment being fixed to said first band toward said free end of said first band, so as to be located on an opposite side of the tightening device with respect to said fastening end of said first band, thus preventing a separation of said first band and said tightening device;

said first band including an inner surface facing said base and an outer surface facing away from said base, said abutment extending away from said outer surface of said first band and being adapted to be engaged with said tightening device;

at least one linkage of said at least one linkage being movable relative to said first and second lateral flanges to a boot removal/insertion position extending substantially along a plane parallel to said plane of said base.

Claim 2. (*Canceled*)

Claim 3. (*Canceled*)

Claim 4. (*Currently Amended*) A binding according to claim 1, 2, wherein said first and second lateral flanges are attached to said base.

Claim 5. (*Original*) A binding according to claim 1, wherein said tightening device has a passage for guiding said first band, said abutment being wider than said passage.

Claim 6. (*Currently Amended*) A binding according to claim 1, 2, wherein said tightening device has a passage for guiding said first band, said abutment being wider than said passage.

Claim 7. (*Canceled*)

Claim 8. (*Original*) A binding according to claim 4, wherein said tightening device has a passage for guiding said first band, said abutment being wider than said passage.

Claim 9. (*Currently Amended*) A binding according to claim 1, ~~2~~, wherein said first and second fasteners of each linkage are journals.

Claim 10. (*Currently Amended*) A binding according to claim 1, ~~2~~, wherein one guide guides said abutment along said second band.

Claim 11. (*Canceled*)

Claim 12. (*Canceled*)

Claim 13. (*Original*) A binding according to claim 9, wherein one guide guides said abutment along said second band.

Claim 14. (*Canceled*)

Claim 15. (*Previously Presented*) A binding according to claim 1, further comprising a rear arch for supporting a rear of the boot, said rear arch connecting said first and second lateral

flanges, wherein a length of each of said at least one linkage is constructed and arranged so that, when said each of said at least one linkage is forwardly positioned, each of said at least one linkage extends around a front of the boot when the boot is supported on said base plate and in contact with said rear arch.

Claim 16. (*Previously Presented*) A binding according to claim 15, wherein said at least one linkage includes a front linkage having a length within a range of about 25 to 50 centimeters.

Claim 17. (*Previously Presented*) A binding according to claim 15, wherein said at least one linkage includes a rear linkage having a length within a range of about 45 to 85 centimeters.

Claim 18. (*Currently Amended*) A binding according to claim 1, 2, wherein said first and second fasteners constitute first and second journal connections, and wherein said one linkage of said at least one linkage is pivotal about said first and second journal connections to said position extending substantially along a plane parallel to said plane of said base.

Claim 19. (*Currently Amended*) A binding according to claim 1, 2, wherein said first fastener extends from said first band to said first lateral flange and said second fastener extends from said second band to said second lateral flange.

Claim 20. (*Canceled*)

Claim 21. (*Currently Amended*) A binding ~~according to claim 20, wherein~~ to retain a boot on a gliding or rolling apparatus, said binding comprising:

a base for supporting the boot, said base including an upper surface extending along a plane;

a first lateral flange, a second lateral flange transversely spaced from said first lateral flange, said first and second lateral flanges extending upwardly relative to said upper surface of said base;

at least one linkage connecting said first lateral flange to said second lateral flange, said linkage comprising:

a first band extending from one fastening end to a free end, a first fastener attaching said fastening end of said first band to said first lateral flange;

a second band and a second fastener attaching said second band to said second lateral flange;

a tightening device attached to said second lateral flange and fixed to said second band, said tightening device facilitating an adjustment of a length of said linkage by removably retaining a portion of said first band;

an abutment being fixed to said first band toward said free end of said first band, so as to be located on an opposite side of the tightening device with respect to said

fastening end of said first band, thus preventing a separation of said first band and said tightening device;

said free end of said first band having a longitudinally tapered shape,  
said abutment comprising a pair of lateral teeth, said first band further comprising ~~comprises~~ a longitudinal slot open at said free end, said longitudinal slot extending between said pair of lateral teeth teeth;

at least one linkage of said at least one linkage being movable relative to said first and second lateral flanges to a boot removal/insertion position extending substantially along a plane parallel to said plane of said base.

Claim 22. (*Currently Amended*) A binding ~~according to claim 20,~~ wherein to retain a boot on a gliding or rolling apparatus, said binding comprising:

a base for supporting the boot, said base including an upper surface extending along a plane;

a first lateral flange, a second lateral flange transversely spaced from said first lateral flange, said first and second lateral flanges extending upwardly relative to said surface of said base;

at least one linkage connecting said first lateral flange to said second lateral flange, said linkage comprising:

a first band extending from one fastening end to a free end, a first fastener attaching said fastening end of said first band to said first lateral flange;

a second band and a second fastener attaching said second band to said second lateral flange;

a tightening device attached to said second lateral flange and fixed to said second band, said tightening device facilitating an adjustment of a length of said linkage by removably retaining a portion of said first band;

an abutment being fixed to said first band toward said free end of said first band, so as to be located on an opposite side of the tightening device with respect to said fastening end of said first band, thus preventing a separation of said first band and said tightening device;

said free end of said first band having a longitudinally tapered shape, said abutment comprising a pair of lateral teeth, said first band further comprising comprises a longitudinal slot positioned between said fastening end of said first band and said abutment abutment;

at least one linkage of said at least one linkage being movable relative to said first and second lateral flanges to a boot removal/insertion position extending substantially along a plane parallel to said plane of said base.

Claim 23. (*Canceled*)

Claim 24. (*Currently Amended*) A binding according to claim 1, ~~23~~, wherein said abutment is substantially in a form of a wedge, said wedge having a surface substantially perpendicular to said outer surface of said first band and facing longitudinally toward said tightening device.

Claim 25. (*Currently Amended*) A binding to retain a boot on a gliding or rolling apparatus, said binding comprising:

a first lateral flange, a second lateral flange transversely spaced from said first lateral flange;

at least one linkage extending from said first lateral flange to said second lateral flange, said one linkage comprising:

a first band extending from a fastening end to a free end, said fastening end of said first band being directly attached to said first lateral flange by means of a first fastener, said free end of said first band having a longitudinally tapered shape;

a second band having a fastening end directly attached to said second lateral flange by means of a second fastener;

a tightening device affixed to said second band and facilitating an adjustment of a length of said one linkage by removably retaining a portion of said first band against movement relative to said second band;



an abutment on said first band for preventing separation of said first band from said tightening device, said tightening device being positioned between said fastening end of said first band and said abutment;

said abutment comprising a pair of lateral ~~teeth~~ teeth;

said first band further comprising a longitudinal slot open at said free end, said longitudinal slot extending between said pair of lateral teeth.

Claim 26. (*Canceled*)

Claim 27. (*Currently Amended*) A binding ~~according to claim 25,~~ wherein to retain a boot on a gliding or rolling apparatus, said binding comprising:

a first lateral flange, a second lateral flange transversely spaced from said first lateral flange;

at least one linkage extending from said first lateral flange to said second lateral flange, said one linkage comprising:

a first band extending from a fastening end to a free end, said fastening end of said first band being directly attached to said first lateral flange by means of a first fastener, said free end of said first band having a longitudinally tapered shape;

a second band having a fastening end directly attached to said second lateral flange by means of a second fastener;

a tightening device affixed to said second band and facilitating an adjustment of a length of said one linkage by removably retaining a portion of said first band against movement relative to said second band;

an abutment on said first band for preventing separation of said first band from said tightening device, said tightening device being positioned between said fastening end of said first band and said abutment;

said abutment comprising a pair of lateral teeth;

said first band further comprising ~~comprises~~ a longitudinal slot positioned between said fastening end of said first band and said abutment.

Claim 28. (*Currently Amended*) A binding to retain a boot on a gliding or rolling apparatus, said binding comprising:

a first lateral flange, a second lateral flange transversely spaced from said first lateral flange;

at least one linkage extending from said first lateral flange to said second lateral flange, said one linkage comprising:

a first band extending from a fastening end to a free end, said fastening end of said first band being directly attached to said first lateral flange by means of a first fastener, said first band including an inner surface adapted to face the boot and an outer surface adapted to face away from the boot;

a second band having a fastening end directly attached to said second lateral flange by means of a second fastener;

a tightening device affixed to said second band and facilitating an adjustment of a length of said one linkage by removably retaining a portion of said first band against movement relative to said second band;

an abutment on said first band for preventing separation of said first band from said tightening device, said tightening device being positioned between said fastening end of said first band and said abutment, said abutment extending away from said outer surface of said first band and being adapted to be engaged with said tightening device.

Claim 29. (*Previously Presented*) A binding according to claim 28, wherein said abutment is substantially in a form of a wedge, said wedge having a surface substantially perpendicular to said outer surface of said first band and facing longitudinally toward said tightening device.

Claim 30. (*Currently Amended*) A binding to retain a boot on a gliding or rolling apparatus, said binding comprising:

a base for supporting the boot, said base including a surface extending along a plane, a front end and a rear end;

a first lateral flange and a second lateral flange, said first lateral flange being transversely spaced from said second ~~first~~ lateral flange, said first and second lateral flanges extending upwardly relative to said surface of said base;

a front linkage and a rear linkage, said front and rear linkages connecting said first lateral flange to said second lateral flange, each of said front and rear linkages comprising:

a first band and a second band, said first band extending from one fastening end to a free end, a first fastener attaching said fastening end of said first band to said first lateral flange, a second fastener attaching said second band to said second lateral flange;

a tightening device attached to said second band, said tightening device facilitating an adjustment of a length of a respective one of said front and rear linkages by removably retaining a portion of said first band;

an abutment being fixed to said first band toward said free end of said first band, so as to be located on an opposite side of the tightening device with respect to said fastening end of said first band, thus preventing a separation of said first band and said tightening device;

at least one of said front and rear linkages ~~linkage of said at least one linkage~~ being movable relative to said first and second lateral flanges to a position extending substantially along a plane parallel to said plane of said base;

each of said front and rear linkages being movable relative to said first and second lateral flanges from a forward boot-removed position and a rearward boot-inserted position,

whereby in said forward boot-removed position both of said front and rear linkages have lengths, while said first and second bands of said front and rear linkages are not separated, sufficient to extend forwardly beyond said front end of said base.

Claim 31. (*Previously Presented*) A binding according to claim 30, wherein said front linkage has a length within a range of about 25 to 50 centimeters and said rear linkage has a length within a range of about 45 to 85 centimeters.

Claim 32. (*Canceled*)

Claim 33. (*Currently Amended*) A binding to retain a boot on a gliding or rolling apparatus, said binding comprising:

a base for supporting the boot, said base including a surface extending along a plane, a front end and a rear end;

a first lateral flange and a second lateral flange, said first lateral flange being transversely spaced from said second ~~first~~ lateral flange, said first and second lateral flanges extending upwardly relative to said surface of said base;

a front linkage and a rear linkage, said front and rear linkages connecting said first lateral flange to said second lateral flange, each of said front and rear linkages comprising:

a first band and a second band, said first band extending from one

fastening end to a free end, a first fastener attaching said fastening end of said first band to said first lateral flange, a second fastener attaching said second band to said second lateral flange;

a tightening device attached to said second band, said tightening device facilitating an adjustment of a length of a respective one of said front and rear linkages by removably retaining a portion of said first band;

an abutment being fixed to said first band toward said free end of said first band, so as to be located on an opposite side of the tightening device with respect to said fastening end of said first band, thus preventing a separation of said first band and said tightening device;

each of said front and rear linkages being movable relative to said first and second lateral flanges from a forward boot-removed position and a rearward boot-inserted position, whereby in said forward boot-removed position both of said front and rear linkages have lengths, while said first and second bands of said front and rear linkages are not separated, sufficient to extend forwardly beyond said front end of said base.

Claim 34. (*Currently Amended*) A binding to retain a boot on a gliding or rolling apparatus, said binding comprising:

a base for supporting the boot, said base including a surface extending along a plane;

a first lateral flange, a second lateral flange transversely spaced from said first

lateral flange, said first and second lateral flanges extending upwardly relative to said surface of said base;

at least one linkage connecting said first lateral flange to said second lateral flange, said linkage including a first band extending from one fastening end to a free end, a first fastener attaching said fastening end of said first band to said first lateral flange, said linkage further including a tightening device attached to said second lateral flange, said tightening device facilitating an adjustment of a length of said linkage by removably retaining a portion of said first band;

an abutment being fixed to said first band toward said free end of said first band, so as to be located on an opposite side of the tightening device with respect to said fastening end of said first band, thus preventing a separation of said first band and said tightening device;

at least one linkage of said at least one linkage being movable forwardly relative to said first and second lateral flanges unrestricted by said first and second lateral flanges from a use position to and in a boot removal/insertion position.

Claim 35. (*Previously Presented*) A binding according to claim 34, wherein said at least one linkage of said at least one linkage being movable relative to said first and second lateral flanges forwardly, when the binding is attached to an upper surface of the gliding or rolling apparatus, to engagement with said gliding or rolling apparatus in said boot removal/insertion position.

Claim 36. (*Previously Presented*) A binding according to claim 35, wherein said gliding or rolling apparatus is a snowboard, and wherein, in said boot removal/insertion position said at least one linkage of said at least one linkage is engageable with an upper surface of said snowboard.